

SKETCH OF A TOUR
IN
SWITZERLAND. K

Nature itself is a garden.
ANONYMOUS.

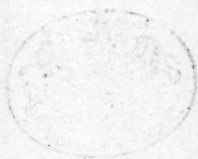
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IT was at Morges that we had for the first time a view of Mount Blanc through a cleft in the Chablais rocks, on the other side of the lake. Some minutes before this we had a bare glimpse of its summit indeed, but at this cleft, its attendants having first come forth severally to view, it presents itself entire—And now the Chablais of a sudden puts on a new and more majestic appearance.

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The view from the signal of Aubonne compasses at once both extremities of the lake; but the western side should be seen by the rising, and the eastern by the setting sun. The mouth of the Rhone cannot I believe be defcried. You see distinctly the glaciers of Mount Blanc rising up on its volume in ridges—hue of the mount itself that particular one between the folds of a white rose. Its superiority over the circumjacent heights was measured in a striking manner, the sun not setting to it until long after he had to every other: indeed such an object, if any on the surface of our hemisphere, is worthy of meeting singly and of fixing the last lingering regard of that luminary.

At one extremity of the lake the situation of Geneva could be guessed at by its smoke only: At the other, Villeneuve seemed immersed up to its spires in the water. Behind our right shoulder, in proportion as the day departed, the dark-purple hue of the Jura, then its gray blue, afterwards blackest green.—The bank of the Vaud along the Swiss side of the lake running towards us from the mountains behind Vevay and, as soon as it arrives on this side of Lausanne, disemboguing itself, as it were, on the rich plain that was poured around us on every side.—Groves of oak—country-houses—corn-fields—vineyards, and

all the towns and villages of the Pays de Vaud. —This view certainly more extensive than that from Laufanne, and it has Mount Blanc. It sees however the lake in such a manner as to contract it on every side ; neither is the aspect so happy that the mountains present here as at Laufanne, nor so varied—ah, where else, in what other fortunate spot shall we find an Italy and Switzerland united.

We went on to the valley of Joux to have a still more extensive prospect. Every step we made, Mount Blanc surged still higher in the skies, seeming to spurn beneath him the rest of the Alps.—The valley of Joux, considering its elevation on the summit of the Jura, must be allowed to be uncommonly fertile ; it is extremely shallow for its breadth, and is said to be not unlike Derbyshire. As to any reputation it may have for beauty, it enjoys a great advantage in that it is natural to compare it to other valleys situated like it on the summit of mountains, particularly the Alps ; otherwise it would surely not appear so exquisitely beautiful. Instead too of cold bleak winds as in those valleys, or of pent-up vapours as in others, you are refreshed by fine breezes tempered in the sun.

In the small lake here, I remarked several dark tinges or stains, owing perhaps to the ex-

ceeding depths at different places—The waves ruffled by the breezes and glistening with sunbeams flickered like fragments of silver leaf when breathed upon.

The signal is planted on the Vauillon, and it takes an hours very fast walking (from the town) to arrive there. Its being haunted by wolves and bears, together with the loneliness of the way, occasion the wind (every now and then as it twangs in your ears) to startle and alarm you.

I got there quite out of breath some minutes before sunset. What a profound solitude surrounds one at these heights in the sky. How keen too and with what sway the wind blows here—On all sides, from the immense distance, every thing appears as through a mist, and darkly.

Between the southern and western points of the compass the whole valley of Joux lay in prospect before me. The lake of Rouffes—The intermediate river weaving its way from lake to lake like a worm.—The road, along which we had come up the valley, a loose-stretched cord. Westward lay France, whose ridges ran across my view far and wide the beginning and the end of them indiscernible, not only on account of the distance but of the setting sunbeams that glared in my eyes.—To-

wards the north nothing but mountain wastes, and wilds.—Between the north and east I descried a lake, and a city at this extremity of it. It was easy to guess that it must be that of Yverdon with the lake of Morat by its side. Farther to the right specks or shadows, said also to be lakes. A broad and lofty mountain covered Orbe; and others again the picturesque valley of Travers. All these objects together with the Vevay mountains, the canton of Friburgh, and glaciers of Berne, completed this quarter.

Between the eastern and southern points broadly gleamed the Geneva lake revealed however to view as far only as the promontory of Yvoire, that horn of its crescent being eclipsed by the mountains. Beyond lay the Swiss Alps on one part, and those of Savoy on the other, when Mount Blanc proved to be without effort the first.—I had nearly forgotten the valley of Romainmôtier, it lay so directly under my feet—its low stone walls that by way of a hedge intersect it in every direction like silver rims.

The precipices here are as steep as any among the Alps. I advanced to the brink with a fearful curiosity, allured by the shrubs and verdure with which they are embellished. After having gazed at every object, near or

distant, that is commanded by this signal, I looked back on the west, and found that the sun had now been long under the horizon—Before night could yet overstride me I was at the town.

The next night I got back to Lausanne, and the following morning resumed my journey before the clock had struck five.

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How much more imposing upon the eye is extent in height or depth than in length or breadth, for if this lake of Geneva could be supposed perpendicularly raised up on one of its sides it would in some parts be six miles loftier than Mount Blanc, and in others nine. Raised up on one of its ends, it would reach to the supposed extremity of the earth's atmosphere.

One might fancy, upon seeing the Chablais, that the earth having of old conceived a great burden of rocks, in proportion as they have grown, has distended itself in every direction. At last, unable to contain them any longer, it has burst: whereupon the rocks stand forth to view, looking out in several places.

A poet, who was a philosopher, has compared them still better to a body starved to

death, the skeleton sticking out every where, the skin shrunk, dry, and parched.

That which seems to be fine dark-brown mould scattered upon those rocks, are firs; for they are at the height of more than three thousand feet perpendicular above the surface of the water, and ten miles distant in a straight line. The four regions of vegetation mentioned by botanists distinctly marked: corn fields and meadows, woods, pastures, mosses and lichens, —above naked rock. From the base of these the rich bank of Evian rough with woods is lengthened out, framing the lake for some miles towards Geneva.

Mountains of Savoy that roll in large tumultuous waves, and that tumble and dash from Mount Blanc (whose face they hide) to the lake. The bank of Evian serves between the latter and these as a line of demarcation only. On this shore between the lake and the Jura the Côte is seen strown over with tumid woods of oak as a whirlpool with spots of foam, for like a whirlpool the Côte is concave.

—The sun rises at one extremity of the lake, and sets at the other. At meeting full his setting look the rocks around Villeneuve though muffled with thickest streaky air blush and sparkle like carbuncle. But when he rises

you should view the Jura, she smiles as she gracefully files off towards Geneva, her right shoulder turned from the sun, and dropping down her mists at his beams.

Changeful appearances of the Pays de Vaud in the morning and evening, in the spring and autumn, under a strong gust of wind, or a storm of thunder and lightning*. Ever-changeful waters of the conscious lake, violet-purple, purple of roses and of lilachs—veins of emerald—fluid sapphire. Viewing them all in one from the signal, whenever the sky fairs, they fret like molten lead. Before rain comes on, currents are remarked on their surface, describing deviously their lucid paths, like rivers advanced some way into the sea and not yet mingled with it.

To help you to a choice of objects in a landscape so original so diversified so extensive, the clouds become by fits frugal of the sun shine, and spread it sparingly here and there upon some interesting spot—thus fetching it out to view for a short moment. And as this partial light travels in time over the whole landscape in succession, you do the same, and yet never become familiar enough with any part of it.

* There is a rainbow that haunts the rock of Meillerie on this last occasion.

Members of the landscape large, grand, majestic, and that harmoniously combine together.

That morning the air was calm and serene so as to agree perfectly with my then tone of mind.—Pale indistinct brown of the Jura—Strong-marked blue rim on the outline of the western part of the lake across it in its greatest breadth. Promontory of Yvoire sweeps into the lake like a reversed scythe. Contrast between the Chablais and the Jura—the latter like Milton's Raphael had its head waist and feet winged with clouds.

All the Chablais tipped or rather thick-plated over with dawn. The lake stained and striped with blue and green of various shades. The fresh-green meadows of Savoy, its woods like the tufted moss, and its aged rocks above with their dishevelled snows, all swelled out to view, and seemed to have been urged two-thirds nearer the Lausanne shore than during winter. Fishing smack sailing at a distance shewed no bigger than a down feather—the towns on the Savoyard shore than children's little paper boats. The bank on this shore, from Lausanne to near Vevay, covered for two or three leagues with walled terraces would have resembled the pictures we see of the fortified rocks of Gibraltar, had not

the vines wrapped them round with one continued web of the brightest verdure.

As you proceed to Vevay the mountains of Savoy gradually drop down behind the Evian bank as through a trap-door—The moment you get half-way they have vanished totally.

From the steeple of Vevay cathedral you behold the grand vista that from the mouth of the Rhone pierces into the Valois; its extremity blocked up by a mountain in the shape of a broad skittle.—Alternate advance of the mountains on each side—The Rhone welling out into the lake. Numberless winding wrinkles and furrows on the sides of the Chablais, worn by the rains, snows and springs trickling down them; so many tortuous vallies, the sinking beds of as many rivers. These less sinuous in the Villeneuve mountains as they stand more upright. The Evian bank fore-shortened, and thereby seems much thicker—immense breadth of the lake at that part.

If now you turn yourself round to the right (where you see the lake in profile) there the Jura displays a long-extended blueish-gray shadow, and the Côte proves to be its shelving sides only. The corn fields and towns thereon like so many spots of sunshine. The bank towards Lausanne, for a league or more, finely clouded with trees, and distinct with villages.

—The rest is a fractured shell of ground that shuts up the view, rising with broken edges all around the remaining sides of the cathedral. It is covered with vines up two-thirds of its height, and then with pasture and woods.—Noise of cannon on the opposite shore of Savoy; the report conveyed by the lake which serves as a sound-board to every noise in the towns around its borders.

All the way in proceeding from Laufanne to Villeneuve you might perceive Savoy waning from east to west.—Meillerie, the castle of Clarence, and its fabled grove, have had a happier destiny than to be described by me; as well as all this country which, in any competition for excellence that it may have with others, shall certainly too have my vote and wishes! Beautiful rocks, intermingled with verdure and trees, line this part of the shore (from Moutrû to Villeneuve.) Near the castle of Chillon the road wafts you down to the foot of lawns, out of which arise several robust chestnut trees that arching aloft their branches form, interrupted indeed, but spacious and airy porticoes underneath. Above, rich meadows and other woods, overhung in their turn by high-piled banks of rock whose tops are jagged with fir. I stopped here awhile to take the breeze of the lake.

Fine afternoon and sun-set as I got to Bex.
—Sanguine tints in the clouds—Summits of
the rocks (from the sun's reflection) of pallid
porphyry—

The walk up to the signal at this place is
very interesting; here too is a continued bower
formed by lofty-spreading trees. When arri-
ved there you behold a broad valley eighteen
miles in length. The horizon on all sides
made up by mountains; it glances off however
to a distance at the great inlet into the Valois
on the left-hand of your prospect, as it does
also on the right, in order to admit a part of
the Geneva lake. In the first instance the
view stoops down into the Valois, though still
without alighting on the ground. Half-way
between Bex and the lake of Geneva there is
a long insulated crag holding up a square Ro-
man tower with ruins scattered near it; they
seem to be almost sunk in trees. As usual
there is on the mountains a struggle between
cultivation and barrenness. Their prerogatives
are so unsettled, that each is alternately mak-
ing incroachments on the other.—Some of the
richest vallies that have all the tenderness and
freshness of youth about them are caressed in a
manner by a neighbouring mountain, or by two
together as they unite to support the precious
burden.—It is generally at the point where

the mountains rise off the plain that the towns gather in so many cruffs. Below our feet the bottom of the valley formed a small plain, whose verdure was of the brightest green, flourished over by trees though oftener divided by them in rather too formal and angular a manner. However in general I never saw a country more agreeable to the fancy, it is the reign of the Dryads and Hamadryads—The villages, catholic chapels, convents, could with difficulty be espied amidst the thick foliage. At this time there happening to be rain and thunder the blacker that the firs over St. Maurice grew at one end of the prospect, the more luminous became the lake of Geneva at the other.

The next morning I entered the Valois by St. Maurice—Rich magnificent scene of rocks and woods that overhang it. — Having passed through the town you remark standing on your right hand a prodigious wall of rock, horizontally intersected by shrubs in several places; half-way up a hermitage has nestled itself.— Proceeding farther on you have on your left-hand lofty verdant mountains, where trees and verdure exude and swell out in numberless spots.—Cottages here and there bring to my mind Marmontel's Shepherds of the Alps.—Stringy cascades, whose gleam is seen only

by fits, and which do not rebound from the rocks but clinging like slime or oil slide down them.—At last there is a violent ebullition, so to say, of woods which copiously gush out of the bank, and hurry down in a long sweep to the Rhone.

Two hours or more after I had entered the Valois, methought I saw at a great height up the mountain, on my right hand, a thick white column of clouds driven forcibly downwards, and surging downwards; but by the crash with which it fell, and the mists that the wind is ever winnowing off it, I knew it for the fall of water at this place. Although you from the first perceive it to be but a third part the height of the bank yet, upon coming nearer, it appears to project from the very summit itself.

There are two or three streams, besides the main one, that trickle copiously down the rock, white as milk in several veins growing thick one out of another.

As I saw this cascade several times I found that it assumes a different appearance according to the season, weather, or time of day. For the next time I passed that way during the great heats it was big swollen by the liquefaction of the snows, so that its several currents were all confused into one. The last time that I saw

it was at about nine o'clock in the morning, in the latter end of autumn. The stream had developed its long silvery tresses, letting them run out their whole length until they had reached the ground. They were largely dishevelled, and wantoned with by the breeze which happened to blow rudely at that time, but no sooner had the sun shone out than a rainbow approaching confined and braided them. And I amused myself with making it slide up and down the cascade alternately from top to bottom: you may even take it off entirely by proceeding a little farther along the road; when upon turning your eye you behold the mere cascade floating and waving in ringlets.

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The country in general, from Vevay to Gruyeres, flowery meads and swelling pastures with ambient trees. This is one of the favourite spots of landscape painters. Having passed Gruyeres our journey lay along the banks of the river Sane or Sareen. Its waters are of a bright sea-green colour; it flows in a serpentine direction in its valley at the foot of a ridge of mountains. The slopes or declivities of these were more or less gradual; were variegated with clumps of trees, flowery meadows dancing through them. Sometimes they stem

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the river by a rocky bank, sometimes by a plain-sheaving gravel shore or a grass plot. Their heads lofty and stiff with fir, but those on our right-hand were of less elevation, and laying aside the terrors of their brows they approached quite close to us with the mildest aspect.—Nothing but pastures—At last the track of the river (of which the road never once loses sight) conducted us across that mountain that is pitched here as a sort of land-mark between the cantons of Fribourg and Berne. This side of it steep and picturesque in the highest degree; its pastoral scenes bring a second time to my mind Marmontel's Shepherds of the Alps. The higher we ascended the more profound did the valley become along which the river was passing; though as often the contrary happens.—Its sides massed with some thousand pines—Every now and then we amused ourselves at beholding through their openings the river fuming below amidst the loose fragments of rock that the channel had thrown down in its way, twisting round them, or tripping up or leaping over them. One while it was fain to start aside—Then it would suddenly sink down, leaving us to halt after it as well as we could—Next it would whirl round behind a clump of trees and there hide itself. By keeping constant to the track of this river

we arrived in a valley which may be called Roffiniere or Rougemonde for it begins with one village, and ends near the other. There the mountains on all sides were of moderate elevation, scarcely mountains indeed—yet scarcely hills. The pastures extended to the very top—herds, and flocks of sheep and goats—We slept at a place whose name I find now was Gefner.

Set off at five in the morning—The sun mused sweetly upon the minister's house, this and the church were of stone; they are the only buildings in a village that are not of wood. The valley preserves much the same appearance as yesterday. As then, milksheds and wooden hamlets with the slouched roofs.—At Zwey-fimman we changed our guide, for now the river Kandel began to shew us the way, and was to conduct us to Thun.

In general it may be said that if you have seen one of these valleys you have seen them all. It is difficult to express the chearful calm and tranquillity the mind feels in travelling through them. On all sides the view is short, being shut in by green mounts; and the only passengers that you meet with on the road are the peasants, passing to and fro about their ordinary occupations. Scarce a sound to be heard but the tinkling of the herds bells. The hour

of noon indeed may be told by the insect chimes, and midnight by those of the lone gnat (to the wakeful). But the rest of the twenty four hours, from morning to noon from noon to evening, is marked by these sounds proceeding uniformly from shrill to grave. Such is the soft music that lulls you a-sleep at evening, and awakens you by morning.

The farther you proceed towards Thun the valley grows wider and more variegated. At last it conducts you into a rocky strait of a great height, black hairy-grown or shagged with fir. This again brings you to a wide open country. Two or three hours after, you arrive at the lake of Thun, and proceed along its banks to the city of that name.

I went over this lake in my way to the Oberhasley. Its waters were at that moment of a fresh raw green with foam driven over it like numberless chips before the wind.—Its character is simple, and rustic. It forms a contrast to the magnificence of the Geneva lake; there the pomp of cities and towns, here wooden villages. You remark in it some abbreviated parts of that extensive lake; as too it is narrower by at least two thirds you see the opposite banks from either shore distinctly—you might have an exact picture of it by presenting a camera over against that part of the lake of Ge-

neva that lies between Villeneuve and Evian, the whole tour of the Thun banks containing nothing that will not be found in that compass excepting one or two cascades, and that the villages here are all of wood.

Another time in passing from the Valois to Grindelwald the road conducted us unexpectedly to this lake along the banks of which we walked the best part of a day, the hay-season too having just begun the breeze played upon more than one of the *fenêes*. There was a fine morning scene; nature seemed not yet fully awake. A dripping cloud, that had lingered after all the rest had departed with the night, drooped between the folds of the mountain at that part where there is a small creek. Upon the whole it appeared to me more beautiful than I had before thought it; owing perhaps to its being surveyed from a better point of view than any upon its waters. The bank along which I was walking often beguiled me into a pleasing reverie that I was roaming without end upon some English pleasure ground, but as often some stupendous object as a mountain or the lake striking my eyes dissolved one charm by raising another. The path in some parts betakes itself into a grove of firs or pines; sometimes it glanced along the very edge of the water, then suddenly sprung away

again—Then it would soar and hover above it, as hesitating whether to descend or not—

The country (called the Interlachen) that joins this lake to that of Brientz bears a striking resemblance to that between Villeneuve and Aigle on the road to Bex; a resemblance by the bye to be found in several other lakes of Switzerland. We took a boat to go along that of Brientz—At first there is a species of natural port or haven formed by a beautiful low dike that comes half across before you arrive at the main lake. The lake of Brientz is banked up, except at the two extremities, by lofty mountains; they are well wooded, but those on the right hand, as you proceed to Brientz, are more rocky barren and steep than those on the left which shelve more into the water, and are variegated in their whole length by meadows, orchards, and three or four villages—Ruins of the castle of Rinkenburgh—Half-way there is near the right-hand shore a little stud of an island that with its garden and cottage embosses the surface of the water. This lake is about three miles in breadth, and nine or ten in length; it is profound, in some parts drawing two hundred and fifty fathoms—It is said to resemble that of Wallenstadt more than any other. The village of Brientz, which gives a title to it, is remarkable only as

it is the largest in the Canton of Berne. It furnishes no less than three companies of some regiment or other, and the Swiss regiments are very full, the Vatteville for instance consisting of two thousand five hundred men. This village is built entirely of wood.

At the extremity of the lake is the Oberhasli, a valley justly celebrated over Switzerland on many accounts, but on none perhaps more than its banks of rock. These have infinite variety of character and expression, to these it is owing that the cascades of this valley are so numerous and fantastic. Often as you proceed along it a cascade springs forth suddenly over your head from rocks as exquisitely cut and polished as prismatic glass (though it is a certain harmonious and poetical arrangement that forms their chief beauty.) Meanwhile the firs on the edges of the banks seem according to their distance, one while of the exact size and shape of nettles, at another of the rows of young box in flower gardens—Above the town of Meyringen is a ruined tower from which you see one of the upper falls of the Reichenbach. The prospect from this tower is strangely like that from the signal of Bex. Instead of the Rhone and the Geneva lake indeed, it is the Aar and the Brientz—There too the fo-

liage predominates over every other object, here the rocks and cascades—

Before I got to the inn at Meyringen, I was stunned by a noise which brought that passage of Livy to my mind where he relates the destruction of Alba. This was caused by the torrent Reichembach, overtaken and dragged down headlong by the floods. I resolved to go and visit it without delay but its appearance did not equal its report.

The next morning I repeated the visit— In the way you have a glimpse of the preceding fall above-mentioned that rends the upper edge of the mountain, and is suddenly after engulfed in trees.

But this where the river ends (being swallowed up by the Aar,) and which is called the third fall, is the principal one. The surrounding decorations of trees and rocks set it off in the most striking manner; particularly that bank that as you stand opposite the fall spreads out far to the right, its outline indented like a flash of lightning. The fall is divided into two stories; in the lower one there is a beautiful stump of rock, green with moss, that at the brim flits off a slip of water which however is quickly reunited below. There the bed of rock swells out so as still not to emerge in any part above the water, varying it at the

same time, and causing it to linger:—you would think that you saw a great number of copious sources entwisted and matted together —They are shoaled down in the midst of the very richest foam-work.

In returning back I met with nothing else worth notice on the whole way to Berne, as I did not see the prospect from the castle of Thun for the bad weather.

The view from the terrace of the cathedral at Berne has at the horizon the horns or peaks of all the Swiss Alps regularly placed as in a scale.

It cannot indeed be denied that in an arcenal such as this of Berne, or that at London, you may read in the most lively and expeditious manner the common-place history of a state. Thus you have a list of the succession of chief magistrates, of the persons that have perished for treason real or supposed, names of provinces conquered, trophies and victories won, midnight murders, and above all, specimens by which you may trace the progress made in the arts of destruction as guns from their first invention to their latest improvement, treaties of alliance and peace &c.

But there is one incident in the arcenal of Berne that I think more beautiful than almost any to be found in common-place histories. It

is that there are several old stands of arms and complete trains of artillery which have actually never once been taken out since first placed there by the workman's hand. There are also others which, no doubt, are ancient as their form is now no longer in use; these are equally fresh and innocent. Perhaps upon search others still more ancient might be found in the same state—and yet no army that has at any time entered Switzerland in a hostile manner ever returned out of it.

Having slept at Nidau on the north-east side of the Bienne lake I got up at four in the morning and set off for St. Peter's isle, the boatmen being ready. The day was a most splendid one, and the approaching heat was announced by the vapours that steamed off the river and lake. The whole bank on the right hand elevated and steep; at the lower parts the vines had realized as much as possible of the soil. Here and there towns at the edge of the water, as is usual on all the Swiss lakes. The bank on the left hand low, but rich in arable ground, wood, and pasture; beyond it an extensive prospect, with Alps whose name we could not discover. This bank rises gradually at the south-east end into a considerable eminence, well wooded and steep.

No place is more easy to conceive without

having seen it than this island. It is as to its horizontal circumference nearly an oval; and as to its surface, of a narrow conical form viewed from the north, but from the west or east a broad one. Its eastern surface, less globular, has a gentle declivity thick-planted with vines; in the midst stands the farm-house, the only dwelling house in the isle, and not far from the shore. An aged grove of oak proceeds over the whole length of the summit.

The island is pitched on a broad pier of rock which runs some distance on every side under the water, and which having extended to the south a great way heaves up at last in the shape of a bank that seems covered with reeds and grass.

They shew you Rousseau's apartment, the window of which looks towards the east; having those Alps above-mentioned stretched before it. Names upon the walls of people of all nations, persons that have come to see the refuge of this great political saint and prophet. Offerings of thanks by fathers and by mothers to the author of the *Emilius*, calling him friend, patron of mankind—testimonies of joy at having followed that example of education—

I strolled for hours up and down wherever I could find a path in the grove of oaks above-mentioned. Underneath it is a thicket, with

devious walks. In the most elevated spot, a pavilion divides the principal path which follows the direction of the oaks, though by no means in a servile manner. The outside of its walls are feathered with wooden tiles in imitation of the cottages on the mountains. After dinner I had a frugal desert in the grove upon blackberries, and immediately fell into a short nap—the air was cool in the thicket, and the light sober and staid. Seats are placed at convenient distances for repose, as well as for the different views over the lake.—Bienne's and Nidau's spires making their reflection on the water like short grass beside a clear fountain.

I regret that my mind was by no means in the tone to feel the sentiments proper to such an occasion, though I had the good fortune to find no one else on the island but the people of the farm-house. But how should any of us expect to enjoy such solitudes as did that most benign and exquisite soul. At least, in order to that, the mind should first have been struck by the thoughtful star

“ And join with this

“ Spare fast that oft with Gods doth diet.”

“ or to sit and rightly spell

“ Of every star that Heaven doth shew

“ And every herb that sips the dew.”

“ or

“ The spirit of Plato, to unfold
 “ What world, or what vast regions, hold
 “ The immortal mind that hath forsook
 “ Her mansion in this fleshly nook ;”

or the being wrongfully held up to the harsh thoughts of misguided mankind.

—The country beyond Berne on the other side having much less simplicity of character begins now to be less interesting as well as less easy to describe, except from Burgdorff for about five or six leagues as far as Langenthal ; in which compass is the greatest variety of the most beautiful and romantic scenes of wood. In this spot our gardeners and painters might find excellent models, here at least the march of Nature is not so gigantic but they might hope not to lose sight of her, though still they must ever be left far behind—You meet with nothing else remarkable until you reach the Rhine.

There are two rivers in Switzerland*, into which its every spring and every flood ultimately fall. These are the Rhine, and the Rhone ; the latter perhaps may be mentioned

* I here suppose the natural (not minding the political) boundaries of Switzerland to be the summits of the St. Bernard, St. Gothard, the Jura, &c. &c.

hereafter, the former now, having first also mentioned the Limmat the Reufs and the Aar, other three rivers by which it is, not inconsiderably, augmented. The Limmat owes its small origin to the mountains of Glarus, among which it went by the name of Linth. Flowing on to within four leagues of Wallenstadt it there becomes the lake of that name. Before it has proceeded five leagues farther its waters increase to so great a bulk that it is obliged to reduce them by the formation of a second lake, that of Zurich, four times as large as the former one: after which, regardless of his former origin, he changes his name for that he now bears.—Some time after this the Limmat makes a very conspicuous figure at the general rendezvous of the rivers near Vogelsang. The Reufs rushes suddenly down the steep of the St. Gothard, and having formed at Fluelen the most romantic of all the lakes, the Lucerne lake, he for some time slackens his pace, falling off towards the right as if spent with so great an effort, until reinforced by the Loretz river coming fresh from the lake of Zug: he then presses straight forward without stop or delay, and embodies himself with the Aar not far from Vogelsang above-mentioned. The Aar begins his career much higher up, and describes it round a much greater extent of territory.

Sprung from the topmost Grimsel he calls forth from all the mountains of Berne his vassal springs and snows — these he quickly beholds gathered together at the lakes of Brienz and Thun; then taking along with him a force sufficient to carry off many ordinary torrents he parades all along the western regions. At Buren he acquires by the Thiele the lake of Bienné, in a word, all the west and north-west lakes and rivers. There is, as I said before, a rendezvous of these three rivers near Vogelsang; where the Limmat and the Reuss, too equal in force to yield to each other, and incapable either singly or united of meeting the Rhine, successively abandon themselves up to the Aar who now becomes indeed the rival of the Rhine, and a rival altogether worthy of him. He hurries on, impatient to contend for the honor of representing the watery nations of Switzerland, and of conferring his name upon them.

In the mean time the Rhine has passed tranquilly along the whole eastern parts of Switzerland, having set off from the very southernmost extremity. To see in its origin this river destined to stretch its length over no inconsiderable part of the circumference of the globe, to see it when it is but a stripling a puny rill dripping down from a most solitary and au-

gust glacier in the Grifons, rocked immediately afterwards in a cradle formed by two close-jutting banks of granite that confine its majestic but yet tender limbs in too narrow a compass, excite respect and awe, the sentiments we feel in contemplating the infancy of Hercules or the origin of Rome. It forms indeed but one lake; however that one is the lake Constance, the largest of all the lakes, a most capacious magazine of waters. Already is he fit to enter that career for which he is born; already the surrounding country hail him chief of the Swiss floods, and he now advances forward with more kingly gait, his banks receding, and making way for him as he gathers his voluminous train. After stepping down the precipice at Lauffen, at which step the woods re-echoed and the rocks trembled, (nor was this a mere seeming) he urges on to meet the Aar.

The struggle was near Guytenburg, where at the very first shock the Aar is overwhelmed and is never heard of more.

The train of this river has ever since been drawing after it, and has ever been resounding over that steep at Lauffen above-mentioned. While you are yet at some distance you discern a mist rising up as of the smoke of so many boiling springs, which announced it to

our eyes, as its din did presently after to our ears like twenty forges all blowing at once. I hurried to the bank, and stood by the mill behind the fall, from whence one can see as far only as the crags that are stuck on its verge; from that point of view I saw throngs of currents shocking and jarring against each other, then united and shot like battering rams against the crags: I saw these again followed close by others, and all with irresistible sway rapt down. But if you wish to see it when it wears its most beautiful aspect you must stand on the road in front; here too you command the whole course of the Rhine for some time before, and for a considerable time after the fall, when it wheels off abruptly to its left around Lauffen castle. At first the waters, standing up at least a fathom above the brim, lap over smooth as a round dark-blue polished flint—in a moment they are snatched and hurried down, then begins the foam over which, if the sun shines, bends the enamoured rainbow. They do not in any part throw themselves plumb down but are fretted over an obliquely-winding rock full of gulphs; and are divided at the very point where they begin to descend, into three principal masses by two crags—one of the three masses is larger than the two others added together, this next the Lauffen bank. The di-

viding crags are covered on this side with moss and shrubs, they have evidently been rift asunder by the currents, and that crag nearest Lauffen being retired more backward than the other, there is ample room for a smaller current to cross over and leaping down to wrestle with the principal one—Another of the crags seems to have been bored through and hollowed out, serving as a muzzle to a part of the torrent that bursts out of it like a cannon-ball.

So that there are several smaller members of the cataract, besides the three main ones, all together putting you in mind of Virgil's *Æolic cavern*, through the crevices of which and doors the winds rush in every direction—

There is an ample reservoir, formed of old by nature, for the waters after their descent; for they came down with such impetuosity, as to be unable to stop themselves in time to wheel off to the left along the channel of the river. Instead of this, they were carried straight forwards, a great way, as far as a rock on which a castle stands, where they divided in two: part went off to the left and pursued its course; the other part was turned off to the right in the form of a vast whirlpool which even now continues, and will for ever continue, slowly, but irresistibly turned round by the column of water that darts for ever from the fall. Let no one

however tempt this either by rowing or by swimming, for, as it is ever losing itself down the main channel in proportion as it is fresh supplied, it must in doing so first be drawn once under the fall; the force of which, not to be equalled by many pile-engines, jars the waves exceedingly, so that they rise up and beat against the shores like the tide of the sea coming in whose lather and whose briny smell they have likewise. The eye loiters with a fondness that nothing can glut on the fresh and sparkling sea-green shuffed beneath the foam and smoke that almost smother it; as well as on the globes and pyramids of mist spun off perpetually from all the smaller members. In some parts the water bubbles and springs up like so many jets, from the smaller members I mean, the main one being fated to rest always an impenetrable gloom. The paintings that we see commonly, do not express all this, and still less the colours, whose delicacy and brightness, to say nothing of their mobility, surpass any pencil; the artist ordinarily confuses them together as if from incapacity and despair he had flung a sponge upon the paper, so clumsily is it done.

I then crossed over to the Lauffen bank, and had to buffet my way through a labyrinth of currents. The castle is on its summit where also is a small pavilion that appears to you,

while below, to be of the shape and size of a ship-lantern. From this you have what is called a bird's-eye view of the fall, you see it after its descent sliding swiftly forwards brushing at the same time the edges of that whirlpool and overtopping it; it swims it rolls over it a long-continued bough, finely disturbing the sea-green deep with its blossoms of foam. This view however diminishes the breadth of the river too much.

But it is useless for me to attempt reporting distinctly any thing of what I saw and heard at the lodge below, which being at the foot of this hill is flapped over, so to say, by the principal mass of the cataract, for there the waters came by me a mountain-blast! flinging off eternal clouds whose impetuosity not yet lost bears them up a long time forward in the air in a deep-moving body. I was struck with a panic, I panted for breath, the lodge rocking all the time under me to and fro with the utmost vehemence.—After having thus seen it in all its aspects, I returned back to Schaffhausen by a private path along the bank of the river: it led me through pleasant scenes.

PART II.

THE best approach to the Gemmi is by the precipices called the galleries, in going up which you have one of the finest views in all Switzerland. Among other objects I recollect that the base of the Valois seemed indeed, as Ramond* says a lake; but with innumerable islands and peninsulas in it. The villages at a distance on the platform of the mountain had dwindled to clusters of dark-brown seeds. Far below our feet vineyards to the bank of the Rhone—Rich grove of firs that descend from the opposite side, and wade across the whole valley. Those mounds so frequently thrown up in the center seem very often the work of art; interesting ruins scattered on them. Wastes of sand, and not apparent but real islands for-

* Ramond is the author that has translated Mr. Cox's tour into the French language. He has enriched his translation by several pieces of his own, likewise in that language; all of them interesting by their style, and many by the information they contain, and the amusing details.

med by the Rhone, so many monuments of the hurry and vehemence of that lawless river—

It is from the Leuckerboden that you set off in order to go up the celebrated pass of the Gemmi. There may be (as there are) much loftier rocks than these; but none that make so great an impression on the eye. Their shape too is terrible and strange, that of a glacier reared upright. I had expected that our road would have been simply like a ladder, having always, as at the galleries above mentioned, the precipice at our right hand cut perpendicularly as a steep along the brink of which we were to writhe ourselves. But the road is wrought up and down the very precipices. It weaves itself up like a worm to the right and to the left alternately. At no time can you divine where it will conduct you for the next five minutes: it pauses several times, visiting every nook, and trying whether it may be firm enough to support its weight; if it goes straight forwards for a minute or two together it is sure to be stopped short by a fissure in the precipice, and is then obliged to return back nearly as it came. It was in vain for the eye to attempt anticipating the path, a part of it being often thrust out immediately above our heads: and wherever you had a perpendicular view of the heights above you saw nothing (as when you

first began to ascend) but rocks growing up out of rocks. A remarkably distinct and musical echo here—Snow fell one of the times that I went up over this pass, and the hollows between and underneath the various precipices were smoothed up by a thick fog. The prominent parts of the rocks were often drifted with earth and verdure on which a few sheep were grazing—numberless herbs and wild larkspurs.—Stumps of trees that have been left by the wood cutters, and that might serve to arrest a mule or any unfortunate person in his fall which at first we concluded to be the reason of it, the fact is however that such is the custom over Switzerland and Germany—Who knows whether it may not be in this very manner that final causes have been so often brought into suspicion by the narrow and hasty judgments of this or that man in the assigning them, whether on the good-natured side or otherwise.

The summit of the Gemmi is a spacious desert commanded by tall mountains of various shape, crested with glaciers. Poles are placed at certain distances to mark the way; these necessary not only on account of the falls of snow but of the stones that are rained down by the surrounding glaciers, and which are often thrown over the path so as completely to bury it. You have never beheld so desolate a place,

and if you raised up your eyes by way of relief to the sky you could find no blue. It was that particular sort of sky with which England loads our heads, many a summer, that leaden cope the cause, say they, of the lunacies so fatal among us. At Leuckerbadeu we had seen the bodies of fourteen wolves that had been killed in this desert. The howling of wolves, and the sliddering thunder of glaciers, are the only sounds ever heard by the passenger. There is a lake here, surrounded by rocks that crowd around it in the form of a crater; itself is said to be unfathomable. Not a blade of grass ever rose on its banks; no sportive fish ever shook its stream. During winter when the ice is sufficiently durable the road passes over the middle of this lake; poles are accordingly placed there as usual to mark the way. The first time that I ever passed the Gemmi, which was late in the spring, we had begun to go over it, there being still a crust of snow; but we had not made many steps when the guide observed of a sudden that only one pole remained upright; the reason of which was that the persons (whose office it is) having neglected to remove the poles just before the season was passed none now dared approach it.

Some way beyond this lake (which is a league in length) there is a hovel, where however you

may get wine, and good bread with the milk cheefe and whey of goats, as well as a stable and hay for your horse.

The stony desert extends far beyond this hovel. At last you arrive at a small plain tolerably verdant and find great numbers as well as infinite varieties of herbs, flowers, and mosses. Farther on a strip of grass lively enough, and sprinkled over with wild flowers; the drops in some parts thickly crowded, flopped by the hand of nature in some relenting mood. The mosses that cushioned the heaps of stones were red, yellow, &c.; but the moss I saw afterwards on the summit of the St. Plomb, one of the outlets to Italy, was of the colour of vermillion and orange: and in those parts where the masses of rock were more thinly clad it was with a very minute blueish-green moss, so that they resembled vast blocks of copper overrun with verdigrease. This scene delighted me exceedingly, and brought to my mind the effect that a country has upon the imagination when viewed through glass of certain colours, though the only change on the objects is as to the colour, you seem to be of a sudden in a new planet.

The glaciers have at different times done incredible havoc, of which the crosses you see stuck up here and there are so many monu-

ments. And it is evident from their menacing aspect here that even this morsel has been hitherto spared only to be devoured last. The descent on the other side opens into the magnificent valley of Kandersteig.

This forms the chief avenue to the glaciers. —We are filled with no small surprise and wonder at seeing a body of frozen snows coming down the channel between two mountains into a fertile rich valley, and there existing many degrees below the point whereat snow never melts; indeed glorying in the resplendent and gorgeous robe of heat flung over them by a July sun. A strange companion this truly for flowers and strawberries, such however is the company they are often seen in.—Whatever may have been the origin of these snows, their continual augmentation at present may be accounted for simply by their union. The larger their mass the more intensely does the common cold glow, if I may use the expression. Thus a forest, when it has become thick to a certain degree, increases in the same proportion that another thin and spare to an equal degree diminishes, though not a single tree more be planted in the one nor cut down in the other.—It cannot be pretended that the thaws during the hot season can balance the

new force acquired by these snows, whatever be the season.

Many are of opinion that the glaciers were formed at the creation of the world. They seem, however, to be only so many overgrown piles of snow that the upper parts (called the horns or peaks) of these mountains fling off from time to time: marks of which are plainly to be seen in the channel along which they pass; and which as they have been borne down in a body, they have cut and ground like locked wheels.* They suddenly form to themselves a great pit, the depth of which it is impossible to discover. Their surface at the upper parts resembles that of those rocks that lie on the sea shore, when wrinkled and jagged by the action of the waves. The lower parts towards and at the extremity are a smooth heapy bed, not any wise gashed but fluted indeed during the great heats by numberless rills which being spun into diminutive cascades and threads of water cause, together with the continual springs, a mournful twanging and murmur. These again are wound off into a small river that stretches along the valley below.

* Formerly there was a road from Grindelwald to Brig, in the Valois, but now long since wedged up by glaciers.

Sometimes a body of snow is undermined by the heat, and rolls downward; this is called an avalanche. Of the two kinds, that which is called the massive avalanche is the most destructive possible, drawing after it a part of the mountain it often crushes a train of twenty or thirty mules that are accidentally passing with their burdens—and has it never upon occasion wedged up the mouth of a valley, the sources and rivers of which, thus denied an outlet or finding only after some interval a subterraneous one, rise into lakes? The other, called the avalanche of spray, is perfectly innocent; you see a bank of snow give way, then crumbling to pieces, cascade itself in smoke down a long pent—Its report however puts you in mind of nothing less than the loosening and drawing back of iron bolts and bars, together with the clanking of chains

“ With impetuous recoil
“ And jarring sound, grating harsh thunder.”

From the inn of Grindelwald you see three glaciers, that from their situation are called the superior, the second, and the inferior. I scrambled up the Wetterhorn to a great height, in order to look down upon the first of these as vertically as possible. In doing so, I had occasion to see clearly how very much the eye is

apt in these regions to diminish the apparent distance, height, and size of every object. — This deception is greater across a lake ; on the other hand, sound is as much increased. — The sun was extremely hot, and darted down vertically his rays upon that particular glacier under my feet. I waited for an hour in hopes of some avalanche being swung off, but it remained perfectly tranquil.

The valley of Grindelwald was poured in prospect around me, its spacious concave divided into three parts by the three glacier rivers. It appeared a profound sea, ebbcd of its waters ; the bottom indeed perfectly green, with numberless cottages scattered over it shell-wise. The elder Sheidec had retired a little behind, on my right hand, having its green tunic fashed by a fine cascade the Millibach.

The second glacier though not so spacious, so purely white, nor rolling so heapy a bed at its feet ; is for its variety of figure, its accessibility, and hideous barathra, far more interesting. Its surface at the upper parts is gashed and rent lengthwise and obliquely : ground over which a plough has lately passed in a slovenly manner, and viewed through a magnifying glass, would have the same appearance in every respect but that of colour. In some parts, this icy glebe lay only fidealong ; but in

others, its sharp edges rose up, moulding themselves into a thousand grotesque and fantastic shapes. Every half minute I heard intermitting noises, as of the harsh griding of waggon wheels, of the loosening and sinking of a ruin—or of a carriage going fullenly over a vault.

At other times I heard a noise exactly like the report of a postillion's whip, this caused I fancy by sudden cracks in the ice, disclosing those deep gaps above mentioned.

These frozen snows were of four different colours according to the degree of light and sunshine that were upon them. At first, when there was least light, they were of a gray-white; at midday, of a sky-blue, extremely brilliant. At about four or five o'clock in the afternoon, they became of a pale bright sea-green, losing itself towards the edges with the softest gradation in white; in the deepest part of their crevices lurks always a dark-prussian blue. However this glacier was much discoloured by vast quantities of black sand and stones, with such havoc had the avalanches of the Fietcherhorn passed over it.

The higher you rise the more glaciers appear, this being but one of the flood-gates that let them down from the reservoir of glaciers lodged amidst the horns. What for want of

reflection one does not expect, the farther you go off from the Shrickhorn the loftier and more ample does it appear.*—On this side, its summit is certainly inaccessible; not only on account of the trenches formed by the glacier, but of its rapidly-sheaving figure.

“Mount Blanc,” says Ramond, “is more
 “vast; he scatters about him a deluge of
 “frozen snows, nothing but ruins in the valleys around him. The Shrickhorn, of
 “smaller volume and rather less elevation but
 “incomparably more sharply pointed, is fortified by smaller branches indeed of glaciers;
 “however he is still more inaccessible than
 “even his rival: the precipices that rive his
 “avenues are more profound, his frozen snows
 “are more shattered, and his declivity is such
 “that even snow itself cannot rest upon it.
 “Like Mount Blanc he is the point of reunion to those veins of chrystal whose branches follow the branches of the glaciers so
 “faithfully, that one cannot help remarking
 “their sympathy. Like Mount Blanc he is
 “the rendezvous of clouds, and the dispenser
 “of rivers.—But in this last respect he has
 “perhaps a superiority, the most considerable

* Some of its fissures which have been formerly visible even on a map will soon be smoothed up by glaciers.

“ rivers rising up out of his domains; the
 “ lord of the Greek and Pennine Alps cannot
 “ dispute against him a part of the Po, the
 “ Rhone, and the entire Rhine.”

As there is some danger in these visits, one might consider them as being at least equal to standing a discharge of artillery, for they explode often, and sometimes commit the most fatal mischief. But seriously, the same principle, that for want of the rightful one encourages many an army in the day of battle, makes every one of the numbers that resort here hope that himself at least may be too fortunate to be their victim. However, from time to time, the forfeit must be paid for the curiosity of so many. The same is the case in several highways of Switzerland, and such is the hard necessity imposed upon them.

Nothing remarkable from Grindelwald to Lauterbrunnen, for which place I set off at three in the morning by moonlight. At this place is the cascade of Stoltbach. It is said to be nine hundred feet in length, this single fall. Half way down the rock bends inwardly, seeming to have been twisted awry. We saw several stocks of trees and large stones that it had hurled down in the season of the floods; these had battered a hole in the ground, throwing up the earth around it in a mound. And yet in

its ordinary state it is so feeble and flight that it is whipped off by the least wind out of its line of direction. During violent rains it becomes black, and seems to be sitting down so much foot.

Another time I left Grindelwald for Meyringen, chief town of the Oberhasley, six hours distant. I set off at nine in the morning, and at parting a glacier gave us a salute—The Wetterhorn, (a prodigiously fine rock) entangled in a chain of clouds—It forms a broad and lofty pyramidal wall, or rather a succession of several walls, each retiring back a little before it begins to rise. If great things could be described by small, the Eigerhorn is of the shape of a gun-flint, standing on its broadest edge. It is in passing over this great Sheidec that you see the whole zig-zag of the Grindelwald glaciers; and as for the Shriekhorn, as I said before, the farther you retreat from it in an ascending direction the more imminent do its steep become.

—In the way to the Oberhasley, you pass by the Wellhorn, whose prowling glaciers stoop far down into the hollow, and reach at you, for the top of the Sheidec is but a vale to the adjacent heights.

—After a considerable time, we arrived at the first fall of the Reichembach; it bursts

forth in froth from a chink in the rock, before it gets near the bottom a part of it meeting with a shock whirs off in a lesser fall—We found that in one place our path had been crushed not long ago by a neighbouring bank.

It is over this country that the læmmergeyer ranges, the eagle of the Alps. He measures fifteen or sixteen feet from tip to tip of his wings outstretched, and his ferocity is said to equal his strength and stature. “King of the air,” says Ramond, “he requires like other kings an extensive territory to subsist in; it is rare that the same region ever sees two of them together. They would starve each other in a country capable of maintaining a vast multitude of their subjects.”

He adds “it is chiefly against the chamois that we must see him exert his whole force and address. The chamois has that agility upon ground, that the læmmergeyer has in air. He sports upon the very brink of precipices, he flies over distances to the extremity of which it would seem that wings only should transport him; he gains summits so steep that their surface does not afford room for the foot of any other creature to rest on, he precipitates himself from the top of the loftiest rocks without fear of breaking

“ his long springs of steel. Considerable
 “ strength must be inseparable from such agi-
 “ lity ; and the chamois is a prey by no means
 “ unworthy this most terrible of birds. The
 “ læmmergeyer rouses up his prey in the recess
 “ of those uninhabitable vallies where he was
 “ feeding secure from the pursuit of man. He
 “ attacks and frightening him forces him to
 “ seek his safety in flight. The rocks are or-
 “ dinarily the refuge of this timorous animal ;
 “ the eagle follows and obliges him to gain
 “ the heights—He vaults across the frozen
 “ snows, darts like the lightning glimpse from
 “ summit to summit, until stopped short upon
 “ the shelving brink of an abyss he has no
 “ other resource than to turn and make head
 “ against his dreadful adversary. The læm-
 “ mergeyer, observing him, turns him round
 “ and round, and feigns several times that he
 “ is going to swoop at him—the chamois points
 “ his horns against these false attacks, but just
 “ in the moment when his posture is so straight-
 “ ened that it is easy to make him lose his
 “ balance, the eagle advances and with a
 “ stroke of his wing flings him headlong to
 “ the bottom of the rocks to a depth so great
 “ that it is impossible for any, even all his,
 “ address to save him from certain death—he

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 “ stroke of his wing flings him headlong to
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 “ that it is impossible for any, even all his,
 “ address to save him from certain death—he

“ drops down close after, dispatches him with
“ his beak and devours him.”

*

I returned by the way I had come to Stanstadt, a little village port on the right branch of the lake of Lucerne, the rain still continuing. You go over this part of the lake in order to reach Lucerne. Such is the beauty of this part that the bad weather absolutely could not spoil it, I was delighted in spite of it. I passed two entire days (that proved divine) one to explore its branches, another its channel, taking on the spots what imperfect and mutilated notes I was able.

Upon coming out of Lucerne you are immediately in a great bay formed by the head of the lake. On the left-hand bank there is a ruined tower seated upon a rock, and robed with decency in trees. Variety and beauty of this bank as well as of the opposite, both being however of nearly equal elevation which is moderate; but the former shines with more glory by means of its amphitheatrical figure. It is set in a fine frame of rock covered with rich foil and trees, decorated at the same time with villas, you will observe, and not cottages: for these you have on the right-hand bank,

and it is a law from which this lake never deviates that no two objects shall be alike. After this we remarked natural piers of rocks, jutting out from the left bank to divide and break the waves; whereas on the right-hand there is but one, and that so overheaped with trees, that they seem tumbling off its back into the water. The unequal outline of this last bank, springing alternately up and down, resembled the flight of a swallow in two or three bounds; now describing a wide low elliptic arch—then taking a sweep or stoop returned upwards, and at last gradually skimming down until it alights upon the promontory's extremity and settles there.

This is contrasted, as you advance farther, by mountains that descend from their proud career in the air less gradually—Some of them drop plumb down.

You now come to a second bay, formed by the right branch of the lake.

I observed in the moulding of the mountains and of the shores, a thousand caprices and fancies. Sometimes they remain fidelong, too unwieldy to stand erect; and thus stretch along the edge of the water like huge lop-sided vessels. At other times you imagine that you see one, sliding out to view from behind the rest, launch itself rapidly and far into the middle of

the bay; follow the humble promontories, floating like rafts chained to one another.

I observed the woods lounging like herds or flocks up and down the hills; sometimes on their summit, or here and there variously on their sides. Some descending to the very brink of the water, and even dipping into it, as it were to try its temperature.—Others entering it at once till it reached their waist—Single trees strayed from the rest, and couched listlessly.

On the mountain behind Stanstadt you see rocks, woods, and whole pastures with their herds flocks and rivers hoisted up to a vast height in the air—This explained to me the fable of the Titans.

This second bay contains a third within it, of which Stanstadt has the key. Busy motion at the entrance of mountain before mountain, shifting like scenes. Immediately that you have entered into this third bay, you see at your right hand innumerable hords of trees that stand in array, head above head, making a broad phalanx into which the light can scarcely penetrate.

It was amusing, to observe the gamesomeness of the shores whenever we made towards some new bay, or proceeding along the main channel arrived at those parts where it takes a

sudden turn, as it does often in its mæanderings. You see imaginary bounds, and you stretch after them as fast as you can while they at first stop and wait for you; but long are you beguiled by beautiful recesses of water that flit before you, till at last just as you think yourself sure of touching the enchanted shore, the rocks on either side unlocking themselves open wide and, as soon as they have let you into a new lake, close behind you again.

In this manner is the traveller seduced from one end of the lake to the other, along a maze of lakes, so to say. The whole time it is a drama upon a stage, divided into so many acts.*

—The banks of some lakes are too bashful, no one dares advance itself out before the rest to meet the eye of the spectator. (Each waits seemingly determined not to be the first to break silence.) But those of Lucerne shew all their charms, and this without ostentation. Fond of their native liberty and too full of using it to mind criticism they vary themselves into a

* In another respect too, it may be entitled a drama; and the story is the vindication of freedom. In one place you are shewn the spot where the three fatal peasants took the oath.—There William Tell leaped out of the boat in the midst of a tempest, and more than warned the tyrant of his approaching doom—Here he slew him!

thousand graceful attitudes and postures; animated, frank, and assured, they display every feature even the most ordinary of their character.

In some lakes, such as the Brientz, the Wallenstadt, the mountains crowd together around the shores, shutting out for ever by their skirts all hope of the country beyond them. Here fine vistas caused by the mountains standing wide asunder (the shore between lying flat the while) thus affording the eye a pass to other mountains and valleys at a distance, under other skies.

And then, in how masterly a manner are the correspondent shores of this lake contrasted! Suppose for instance that you stand in the spot that is mid-way between the two branches. Turning your face now towards the right branch, there Mount Pilate, seated opposite you, is at first a gradual ascent, sinking into a concave uncommonly fertile. Its peak is naked rock, or if covered, it is either with snow or with clouds (hence its name;) and it is commonly thought inaccessible. At the same time drawing up with no small majesty around all that shore its limbs, over which long stony robes fall in large loose-flowing folds down to its very feet underneath the water.—In its lap it holds the freshest verdure.—Then turning your face towards the left branch—there stands

Mount Righi, not directly opposite you but more towards your right hand; forming the whole left shore of the lake's channel (as far as Lowerz) and of its left branch the whole right shore, all in one vast angle: and differing from Mount Pilate in every respect. It rises in the form of a pyramid, it rears a small smooth summit, and its sides are so assant that often the plodding cow finds herself strangely at the very top. Its soil is neither rocky nor verdant but flaty, scanty firs here and there having terraces or seeming to have them, as is frequent on the Swiss mountains, with this singularity, that as two mountains are pitched on that corner of its base that stands on your right hand, under their accumulated pressure it has sunk prodigiously, so that its terraces run in a downward direction steeply and suddenly into the water.

I now went along the left branch of the lake; this is the fourth bay. At the entrance there is an oblong rock that, having of yore gathered together some gravel and soil, has formed out of them a small island. In process of time verdure and trees have settled upon it. Here stands an obelisk to the memory of those who founded the Swiss independence. Near it are two or three other rocks, much smaller that thrust themselves barely up above the sur-

face of the water ; one of which, surmounted by a small chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary, is grotesque enough. In exploring this fairy lake you often see these little chapels perched on different spots—Ruins of Hapsburg castle on the left bank which, upon the whole, recalls to you strongly the Evian bank of the Geneva lake, but short of its mountains.

After what I have already said it would be difficult for me to describe any more of this lovely lake without falling into repetitions. It is sufficient to add that, having in the above compass shewn me what is in its kind without example, and beyond imitation, it gave successively, as we proceeded the whole way along its channel, a handsome resemblance of several other lakes, such as the Thun and the Zug but, above all, of the Wallenstadt. These resemblances give ideas of improvement upon those lakes—And it were to be wished that, in this respect, art would catch a hint from nature, and thus attain the most sensible the noblest and the only lawful kind of criticism.

We disembarked at Fluelen, and proceeded directly to Altorff, a short league distant, where we slept.

Set off from Altorff, June the fourth, at six o'clock in the morning, in the midst of a foggy rain which continued all day. Our jour-

ney lay up along the valley of Schoellenen by the banks of the river Reufs.

For the first hour or two the valley resembled strongly the Oberhasley, bereft of its cascades. For the next hour and a half it recalled incessantly to my mind the rising part of that which leads to Engelberg with this difference, that the road to-day did not burrow itself up through a wood as it does in that place; and that the banks of the valley here were considerably steeper, as well as its base broader, occupied entirely by the river. Upon stopping several times to rest, and upon looking back along the road we had been passing, I observed the most distant mountains swelling up until they reached a tract of clouds, in which they were lost for some time. My eye traversing that tract, and mounting still higher up, I saw springing high above it until they arrived at another (a second story, so to say, of the heavens) the same mountains, but what words can represent the shadow! (long as a whole country) that they cast over that uppermost tract of clouds.

We had now entered some way into Uri's rocky world. Until to-day my idea of the Alps had been imperfect. What I had hitherto beheld might for the greater part be seen perhaps in other countries; but the scenes of this day were peculiar, and were a true speci-

men of what is called an Alpine landscape. Ghastly precipices, above which shivering half-starved firs were clinging to the stark rocks; here and there a handful of verdure inaccessible to any animal that has not wings unless a chamois—Every half-hour, in proportion as vegetation slunk away from us, the wilderness became more squalid, erect, and gloomy, the rain not in the least abating nor the fog.

I was struck with admiration at the spirited emulation and boldness of so many mountains towering aloft, as well as at the groves of firs rising up and scaling like military tortoises the banks underneath them.

From time to time, they have rolled down enormous ruins of stone which lie scattered variously up and down the valley. They might be compared to so many volcanoes, flinging off heaps of stones, over-running the valley with a lava of rocks which snap short, and blast the once luxuriant woods that grow on their banks.—Fine headlong lumbering cataracts—nor was it easy to hear any person speaking to you, as well from the jarring and hubbub of the cataracts, as from the river making among the masses of rock a strange gargling kind of cry as of one being strangled.—After a toilsome march perpetually ascending the whole way we arrived at the last of the five bridges late in

the evening, as I thought, situated as it is at the farthest extremity of the valley, in the very profoundest and most abrupt part of it. This part of the valley seems to have been formed by the two highest mountains of entire granite being suddenly torn asunder. By the force of the separation, that one on the left hand has lost its balance, and lies strown supinely, covering a length of territory. The other on your right hand remains upright; however with its brow somewhat inclined over its feet, and lowering down upon you

Monstrum ——— cui lumen ademptum est!

The interval at their feet (no matter how broad or deep below the road) is instantly filled up by the river's drift. The bridge does not vault over it at once like other bridges, but it begins by pitching itself far up that wall above mentioned on the right hand along which it bounds as it were up and down, seeking for a resting place from which, having a sure footing, it may take its spring: Finding after some time a very scanty one it ventures upon this rash leap to a point on the opposite rock still loftier, above which it climbs some way with the greatest dispatch, were it to stop too soon it might relapse into the abyfs.—Immediately

after, we found ourselves in total darkness for the space of sixty, if not eighty paces—A gelid humour crept down upon our heads at the same moment. By the time we were restored to light, the day had run back, it being afternoon only. In the midst of a small verdant plain, surrounded by funny low hills, was the river Reufs, gliding along with a mildness that you would believe it incapable of that fury and vehemence we had but just witnessed, and which had astonished us for the greater part of a day. Straight before us, at a quarter of an hour's distance, lay Urseren; and at the distance of three quarters of an hour, the village Hôpital with an old ruined castle above it: Between these lay the summit of the St. Gothard.

The mountain of the St. Gothard, being a country of itself elevated to an extraordinary height, and the smallest of its parts entirely occupying the eye, you have no object of comparison by which to estimate its size: hence it makes not that impression upon a traveller that is expected. It requires reflection here to have cause of wonder, on the scale of philosophy on the other hand, it makes no small sensation. Thus when we read of the Shriekhorn rising two miles and a half, and of Mount Blanc rising three miles in perpendicular height above

the surface of the ocean, one expects a precipice of that height, which would be really stupendous. But before we can obtain a near view of their summit, we have already without perceiving it ascended these mountains upwards of two-thirds. You may be said to have begun the ascent the instant that you plant your foot on Switzerland off the plains of France, Germany, or Italy. I never thought so little of the Shriekhorn as when nearest its peak.

The road over the summit of the St. Gothard is a paved causeway, and enjoys no view whatever but of the banks on the right, and on the left hand. These are but of moderate elevation, and are very monotonous.—Not a tree to be seen—The ascent, before you arrive at the regions of snow, exactly resembles the wild parts of Scotland, which it recalled strongly to my mind. The day was remarkably fine, and the black crags that stood out naked above the snow (which was of the most brilliant whiteness) made the scene resemble a new map, stained with continents and myriads of islands.—The snow becomes hard as pavement when trodden. The river Reufs came boisterously down the mountain in several long bounds. In many places it was covered with snow, a fathom or more in thickness, and which it had

undermined and scooped out into arches. I threw down the heaviest stones that I could lift upon these arches but with little or no effect.

There are on the summit several small lakes, the respective sources of the Reufs, and Tesino. As they were smoothed over with snow I passed over them without knowing it at the time. On one side, at a day's distance, is the source of the Rhine; and on the other, at the same distance, of the Rhone.

“ The summit of the St. Gothard,” says Ramond, “ is a platform of bare granite, girt
 “ round by a few rocks of moderate elevation. These are very irregular in their figure, and shutting up the eye on all sides, confine it to the most frightful of solitudes.
 “ Three puny lakes, and the melancholy hut of the capuchins, are the only objects that break the uniformity of this desert, where not the slightest trace of vegetation is to be found. It must be a circumstance altogether new and surprising to a person, who had never before quitted the plains, to observe the deep silence that reigns over this platform. The least murmur is not to be heard; the wind in traversing the skies never meets a leaf here, whose rustling might betray its passage, indeed when it becomes

“ high it fighs againſt the points of the rocks
 “ in a moſt lugubrious manner. It would be
 “ to no purpoſe to climb up thoſe ſummits a-
 “ round this deſert that are acceſſible. You
 “ might, indeed, hope to transport the eye to
 “ a habitable climate, but you would find no-
 “ thing but a chaos of rocks and torrents un-
 “ derneath you. You would diſtinguiſh from
 “ aſar parched and barren points covered with
 “ ſnows, and piercing up through the cloud
 “ that floats over, covering them with a veil
 “ very often impenetrable to the eye—nothing
 “ of what exiſts beyond would reach your
 “ ſight, except a dimly-dark blue ſky which
 “ ſwinging far below the horizon would bound
 “ the picture on all ſides, and ſeem an im-
 “ menſe ſea ſurrounding this heap of moun-
 “ tains.”

The valley of Urſeren, of about two or three leagues in length, is but a furrow on the St. Gothard. One of the horns of the river Reufs curves through the miſt of it. This valley is the point of reunion to five great outlets: one to Altorff, another to the Grifons, a third to the Grimfel, a fourth to the Valois, and the laſt to Italy.

At fix o'clock in the morning I left Rêalp to go down into the Valois, by the paſſage of the Forks. At firſt, there was a denſe miſt,

and the sun, in illuminating it, shed a sickly orange colour over the valleys, and a certain fantastic indistinctness not unlike a dream. After some time the mist pined away; and we were left to an open warm blue sky, while a row of light silvery clouds remained basking on the bosom of the mountains.

—In a few hours you pass by the glacier of the Rhone, and presently after the hemisphere is turned fast downward over the Valois.

The valley that goes by this name is every way the most extensive in Switzerland. It is upwards of eighty-two miles in length, taken from the Forks to St. Maurice. Such however is rather its political than its natural length; it being in fact prolonged to Ville-neuve, twelve or eighteen miles farther. This is the rich and ample inheritance of the Rhone; here he exercises free and uncontrouled his solitary reign. For some time after his birth he shews no peculiar character that distinguishes him from other Swiss rivers: his size, his colour, his pace, and his surrounding mansions of fir and rock, are the same. In some parts, he has within the main valley another, a smaller one, for his own use only. (The Valois has, besides, a vast number of subsidiary valleys, each of which has at least one river that serves to pamper the Rhone, so emphatically

styled, by Ramond, the destroyer of the vales.)
 —His capricious and arbitrary character—He
 invades and lays waste the fertile fields, only
 to abandon them the moment after—That
 these wide domains are his only—that it is
 only by his sufferance man has the transient
 possession of any part of them. After a course
 of ninety-four miles, he drives with such fu-
 rious onset upon the Geneva lake, that the
 latter has not time to order its waters to make
 way; so that there is a perpetual tempest at
 that part. Directly after, he wheels round to
 the left shore where the lake is more than nine
 hundred fathoms in depth; there he disappears
 totally. We may therefore take the poetical
 licence of supposing that the river, too impa-
 tient to wait, plunges at once down into the
 deepest part, and after one-continued dive of
 five and forty miles emerges again a short way
 on this side Geneva, where it is certain he re-
 appears for the first time. At Geneva, his
 height, size, and swiftness prove to be such,
 that one might be led to think, there must be
 a purpose in fixing those numerous and vast
 lakes on each side of the Alps: by these such
 rivers as the Rhone and the Po are curbed,
 which were they not they might, when stung
 by the summer star, in their frenzy tear up the
 plains and roll them off far into the ocean.

It was now time to take leave of Switzerland which I did at Brig, the most pleasing part of the Valais. It is situated at the foot of the St. Plomb, one of the outlets to Italy.* The settled weather induced me to stop a day there before I passed over into that fine region; and I strolled abroad early in the afternoon, alone, up one of the neighbouring mountains.—Growth and variation of the prospect in proportion as I ascended; this part of the valley below my feet sinking every moment, and the opposite one rising as sensibly, the horizon distending and expanding itself on all sides. There seemed to be a challenge between the villages and cabins, which should spring highest—serving to mark some hundred feet in a perpendicular scale between each mountain-story. The mountains every where furried over with brown fir; in some parts this cloathing resembled a bear's rough-clotted coat. But at the greatest distance they became more scanty, and shewed no bigger than prickles of thorns. At any height that you ascend you can never see beyond twelve or eighteen miles, both directions added together; this owing to the fi-

* It is by far the most romantic of all and fortunately the longest taking up fifteen hours, so that you must pass one night on the mountain.

nuosity of the Valois in every sense, in its base as well as in its sides. For if its volume is too much compressed by the mountains at one part, it dilates itself at another.—Sometimes the meadows lie flat; sometimes in a reclining posture, hooded by trees. Sometimes they can creep up to the foot only of the mountains, but whenever they are accessible climb them to a vast height: there with their charge of cabins and flocks, all clinging to their nutritious breasts, they repose securely.

Imagine our plains to be disjointed or broken in pieces by some earthquake, then suddenly thrown together again in a heap absolutely at random—That in process of time this heap has become strown over with trees mosses and verdure of every sort, as well as crumbled over with hamlets, single or in clusters: that the rivers after several falls have gained the natural channels, and passing in their course through several wide and deep chafms have filled them up, composing thus so many extensive lakes: such, for the greater part, is the country that we have been just passing over.

(Accordingly, all that you have to do in travelling is to follow these rivers; they will serve you as an infallible clue, and will con-

duct you successively upon all the lakes, amidst labyrinths of strangest scenery.)

In those regions the traveller sees or thinks he sees the utmost violence done to the component parts of landscape that can be imagined. Clouds sinking and grovelling on the ground, while whole plains are flung up several hundred fathoms into the air. On the topmost pinnacles of these again does a lake weave its ample web. Market-towns with their massive churches pitching their foundations on the verge of a precipice. Pastures with their herds and flocks upon them hung up little more aslant than a map—And rivers pacing with frenzy along, and at a height that the inhabitant of the plain is at first lost in astonishment how they could ascend there.

—What if you had seen the reverse to Pope's image of a downward sky reflected in a pool of water, an upward earth! not fictitious, but with real shrubs (if not trees) stooping down from it—What if you had heard the mountains yell, and the mass that forthwith comes down along the valley! to which forests of fir are mere reeds, and houses and entire villages but cobwebs.

—The works of nature giving awkward imitations of the works of man, as when rocks take the semblance of castles with tur-

reted towers; or of spires, obelisks, magic cells, alcoves: or as when stuck round with pines that rise perpendicular like so many parallel columns, order above order, the whole forming a sylvan amphitheatre.—Above our road, rivulets drop straight down into the deepest valleys, fathoming them like a plummet line.

Various soils crowded together; various climates suddenly succeeding each other; mixture of seasons! Snows rising refreshed in the midst of summer; and in the lap of bleakest ice, aromatic herbs or glad fruits brightening. And sudden the ground gives way, and a river in its full magnitude sinks down, nor is its course to be followed but by the ear long afterward.—Late rising of the sun, and early setting of it.

Insulated spots of verdure enveloped by rocks, so many sweet kernels within their shells—putting us in mind of the fruitful islands of Philip Quarl sequestered far in the solitudes of the ocean, and destined to remain for ever untouched by man.

A traveller sees through the dusk a distant village, and approaches it; it plunges and disappears. Some minutes after, it emerges again out to view much farther off than before.

Then when he is least aware it dives a second time.

Sometimes this country, (like our English climate) from being excessively inconstant, becomes constant, from variety affects uniformity; conceits and paradoxes would be its best description. Some vallies are composed of rock entire, pure of almost any other ingredient; not a leaf, nor a blade of grass to be discerned. Some there are whose base is water. Others where nothing scarcely but trees appear, neither rocks nor water, all foliage. Some, where the forlorn eye is greeted by nothing but stunted grass or moss; some, but slate—or sand.

Even the works of art here take a singularity, and a wildness from Nature. We see bridges tripping across chasms of the globe, and mocking abysses of water; we see roads lashed round the peaks of mountains that totter with age, or clung to the headlong stoop of a precipice.

“ Sed nos immensum spatiis confecimus æquor;

“ Et jam tempus equum fumantia solvere colla.”



